

HOLIDAY DECORATING SAFETY

Holiday Trees

- When buying an artificial tree, make sure the label reads "Fire Resistant"
- When purchasing a live tree, **check for freshness** and make sure to keep the stand **filled with water** so your tree does not dry out quickly
- Always place your Christmas tree **away from** fireplaces, radiators, or portable heaters
- Be sure that your tree is **mounted on a sturdy base** and is placed out of the way of traffic to ensure that children cannot pull it over onto themselves
- Only use **flame-resistant/non-combustible materials** to trim a tree
- **Never** use lighted candles on trees
- Choose tinsel or artificial icicles made of **non-leaded material** because leaded materials are hazardous to children if ingested
- **If you have small children**, take special care to **avoid** decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces, and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them.
- **Follow directions** carefully to avoid lung irritation while decorating with artificial snow sprays.
- **Avoid** placing small or breakable ornaments on lower branches where small children can reach them
- Keep holiday plants like Mistletoe, holly berries, and Christmas cactus away from small children and animals, as if swallowed are poisonous. Poinsettias can cause stomach aches as well.



Fireplaces

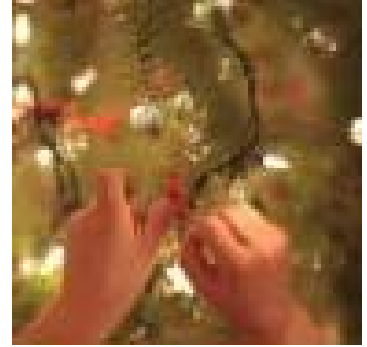
- Use care with "fire salts," that make colored flames when put on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. **Keep them away from children**
- **Do not burn** wrapping papers in the fireplace-these ignite rapidly!



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Holiday Lights

- **Always** hang indoor lights inside your home and outdoor lights outside your home
- **Before using lights** outdoors, check labels to be sure they have been certified for outdoor use
- **Check for** broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections. Throw out damaged sets
- **Use no more than three standard-sized strings** of lights per single extension cord
- **Never** use electric lights on a metallic tree; they can become charged with electricity from the lights and can result in an electrical shock if touched
- **Stay away from** power or feeder lines leading from utility poles into older homes



- **Fasten outdoor lights securely** to trees, house walls, or other firm supports to protect the lights from wind damage. Use only insulated staples to hold strings in place, not nails or tacks. Or, run strings of lights through hooks (available at hardware stores.)
- **Use caution** when removing outdoor holiday lights. Never pull or tug on lights - they could unravel and inadvertently wrap around power lines.
- **Outdoor electric lights and decorations** should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). Portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold. GFCIs can be installed permanently to household circuits by a qualified electrician.
- When you leave your home and when you go to bed, be sure to **turn off all holiday lights inside and outside your home**



Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Information obtained from: U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, National Safety Council, and American Academy of Pediatrics

DeCarli, J (2009)